

Today, the Internet is a tremendous tool to acquire that knowledge. It brings people and ideas thousands of miles apart to a child's desktop. We cannot afford to have this technology available only in financially strong schools. Through the E-rate, those schools and libraries with limited resources are given the necessary discounts to link up with everybody else.

The attacks on the E-rate are an assault on our children's future. Our society must not be divided by those who are computer literate and those who are not.

Mr. Speaker, if we do not support E-rate, we doom and handicap our children. Americans understand and want access to technology in their children's schools, and we must all support the E-rate.

#### PRESIDENT SHOULD SIGN EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS LEGISLATION

(Mr. PAPPAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, the President has an opportunity to help middle class parents give their kids more opportunities in life. Congress passed legislation that would create education savings accounts, which means that middle class parents could save in tax-free accounts and use it towards their children's education. They could use it in any way that they wished, towards private schooling for extra tutoring, or for special help in meeting the needs of disabled children.

It is an insult to parents everywhere to suggest that they are incapable of saving for their children's education, and it is either naive or simply dishonest of liberals to say that the education savings accounts would not benefit poor parents because only private schools costing thousands and thousands of dollars are in existence.

Let us help parents save for their children's education. The President should sign this legislation today.

#### HEALTH CARE REFORM: PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS IMPORTANT FIRST STEP

(Mr. STUPAK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, the leadership of the majority in both the House and the other body have finally entered into the public discussion on the adoption of a "Patients' Bill of Rights."

This is an important step because it is an acknowledgment by the majority that American families are demanding protection in their dealings with Health Maintenance Organizations. It is an important step, too, because the Republican proposals will give the American people a clear choice. They can choose a Republican plan which af-

firms the rights of patients to appeal, but which appeals fall on deaf ears; and without real enforcement provisions, the Republican plan simply moves the consumer's appeal on a denial of coverage up the management ladder to a fancier wastebasket.

The Democratic plan, now that provides real enforcement. It gives you, the patient, the right to enforce all of the provisions of your HMO plan. That is why we need the Democratic Patients' Bill of Rights legislation. The Democratic proposal reaches beyond an election year quick fix to a fundamental problem by giving the consumers real power to enforce their plans.

HMOs have moved into the business of prescribing health care. The Democratic plan makes sure the HMOs are held responsible for such decisions.

#### CHILD CUSTODY PROTECTION ACT

(Mr. LARGENT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LARGENT. Mr. Speaker, Americans value many things, but no value is stronger, deeper or greater than the love that a father and mother have for their children.

Mr. Speaker, no one loves their children more than their parents. Yet we see and hear more every day about how big government is coming between parents and children, about how government is stepping in without just cause and usurping parental rights.

Mr. Speaker, my office and many other offices have heard from families across the Nation that are concerned, frustrated, and even angry over government undermining their authority, and many times we feel helpless. We often find ourselves asking, what can we do about it.

Well, Mr. Speaker, today every Member of this House will have an opportunity to do something about it. Today, Mr. Speaker, parents from across the Nation will be watching our vote on the Child Custody Protection Act.

The act is simple. It says that one cannot transport minors across State lines for abortions in order to avoid notifying their parents. These are deeply held beliefs, Mr. Speaker, and today as we vote on the Child Custody Protection Act, the parents of America will be watching.

#### HMO REFORM

(Mr. WYNN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, now that Congress is back in session, the debate over HMO reform will really begin. It will really heat up. We will hear from the Republican side of the aisle a lot of gimmicks. They will talk about health marks, and they will talk about medical savings accounts.

What we have to understand is that the key to HMO reform is simply this: timely access to needed medical services and the ability to enforce that right. That is what the Democratic plan would do, because it would give patients the right to sue HMOs when HMOs make decisions that deny their patients' rights and adversely affect their health care.

The Republican plan does not offer that benefit because they are afraid to take on the HMOs and the insurance industry.

Let me give my colleagues an example in my district. It is a typical example. A young man is in a bicycle accident. He faces facial disfigurement. His medical doctor says he ought to take a certain course of treatment, but the HMO says no, we are not going to pay for that treatment.

Let me tell my colleagues, if the HMO could be sued for failing to allow necessary treatment, they would change their tune. That is what the debate for HMO reform is all about. I hope we will adopt the Democratic approach.

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE 105TH CONGRESS

(Mr. HEFLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, it is time to take stock of the 105th Congress. Despite a slim majority in the House, a Senate that lacks the 60 votes necessary to break a filibuster and a liberal Democrat in the White House, the Congress has managed to pass an historic balanced budget agreement, middle class tax cuts, and a transportation bill that addresses the needs for improved, safer roads in America.

But while Republicans are proud of that record, they are not satisfied. The cost of government is too great, Washington spending is still too careless, and education reform is being blocked by the usual suspects. The remaining time in the 105th Congress should be devoted to more progress in these areas.

The President has on his desk important legislation to help parents save for their children's education in the form of education savings accounts. Normally this would not even be controversial, but the special interests oppose it, and the prospects for the President signing it are slim.

That leaves us with more tax cuts and fiscal restraint. When it comes to tax cuts, Republicans believe in "more rather than less, sooner rather than later."

Of course, we intend to honor that pledge.

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#### WHY IS THE REPUBLICAN PARTY PROTECTING THE HEALTH INSURANCE COMPANIES?

(Mr. ROTHMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1